

Whatever those things are we must lay them down and free ourselves for service. Chief among those things which prevent our full allegiance to the Lord is sin. The love of sin is what kills not only our relationship with God, but also our love of spiritual things. You can declare your love for God all you want to, but if you don't eradicate sin from your life, then you will not engage fully in being a disciple. Holding on to the Love of sin will mean that you will always have a divided heart.

Another text is relevant to commitment: *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls"* (Matthew 11:28-20). The Lord puts the choice in your hands. What are you going to choose? Much like Joshua's people in the Old Testament, you are being asked by the Lord to *"Choose you this day whom you will serve..."* (Joshua 24:15). Will you choose to serve the Lord or yourself? Folks, it has never been enough to simply say: I love God. What the Lord has always required is a commitment from those who love Him to engage in the life of full discipleship.

What hinders you from getting busy with being a devoted Christian? Is it fear of commitment? You have known from the beginning that you must love God with all of your heart (Mark 12:30). Is it fear of hard work that hinders you? Jesus said, *"...My yoke is easy, and My burden is light"* (Matthew 11:30). Is it the pleasures of the flesh you can't give up? John said we must not love the world or the things in the world (1 John 2:15). Is it your fear that you don't have the time to commit? Remember that you don't have time not to commit (James 2:14).

When will you engage fully in the life of a Christian? How long will you languish on the sidelines?

Church of Christ

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Material:

[Http://www.westcolumbiatxcoc.com](http://www.westcolumbiatxcoc.com)

Schedule Of Services...

Sunday:

Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.
Worship 9:50 a.m.
Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.



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Engage!

David Weaks

"Engage!" This command is thrilling to every blue-blooded *Star Trek* fan. It is what Captain Jean Luc Picard said whenever he had decided on a course of action to save the day and he would send the Enterprise hurtling off to some far flung part of the galaxy to tackle some problem or other. As a fan of the show, you just knew that whatever comes next is going to be fantastic. Picard didn't make many mistakes, folks.

Well, we're not here to discuss science fiction, we are here to discuss the Bible. This word "Engage!" has a spiritual application that cannot be overlooked. Those who love God must engage fully in the

business of being a Christian. Christianity is not a "sideline" affair. You are either involved in the life of a Christian or you are not faithful. Which is it with you.

Let's take a look at some of the instructions of the Bible which make it clear that we must be active participants in the walk of a Christian.

The writer of Hebrews tells us to *"...lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..."* (Hebrews 12:1). The meaning here is clear, is it not? There are things we let weigh us down that prevent us from following Christ fully.

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That's Not How It Used To Be!

David Weak

If you have been paying attention to the world lately, you certainly have thought about the past and made a sad comparison to today. An often repeated phrase is the one that heads this article: "That's not how it used to be!" So much today is alien to those of us who grew up in earlier times. The world is being forcibly reshaped by people who want to glorify sin.

What worries me is that some things people want to change can only end in spiritual disaster for the nation and for people generally. I'm not overly concerned about political changes, because I know Jesus Christ is still king. However, many of the changes that people want today mean they are willing to reject God entirely to have their will realized.

Paul the apostle told us how disastrous this course is. He spoke of the Roman idolaters whose lives were so filled with sin that one incarnation of it was worse

than the last. They rejected the knowledge of God which was evident in creation (Romans 1:20-21), and instead worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator (vs. 23, 25). In the process of this, they also indulged in the lusts of their flesh and dishonored their bodies among themselves (vs. 24). All of this was proof of the real problem: their foolish hearts were darkened (vs. 21).

Where did all of this lead them? Read on and you will see. Paul said that God gave them up to "vile passions" and the women exchanged the natural use of the woman for what is against nature (vs. 26). Not only that, but men left the natural use of the woman and burned in their lust for one another, committing, men with men, what is shameful (vs. 27). They were motivated by a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting (vs. 28).

But that was not the end of it. Paul went on to say they

were: *"filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them"* (vs. 29-32). Folks, all of this corruption, all of this evil, came from one source: they did not like to retain God in their knowledge (vs. 28).

There in verse twenty-eight we have the culprit that lead the Romans to all of their evil. It is the rejection of God and His truth that results in changes in the hearts, minds, and lives of men.

Do you remember a time in your upbringing when most people held the Bible in high esteem? Do you remember that time when people spoke reverently about God? Even if they were denominational

people, they demonstrated a basic respect for the Creator. During those days, was it commonplace to hear homosexuality glorified as a worthy lifestyle? During those days, did you ever hear anyone say that two women were a "cute couple"? Back when the Bible held a place of high esteem in society, how many people spoke with great enthusiasm about abortion and how it is an honor to women that they be allowed to murder their babies? The answer to all of these questions is the same - it is a resounding "NO!"

Our world is coming apart at the seams. I am not talking about Covid-19, and I am not even talking about the racial protests tearing down of statues that is taking place around the country. What I am talking about is the wholesale rejection of the will of God. Society is imploding because men and women do not love the Lord. Evil is everywhere, and when it rears its head it is celebrated. The devil is winning, because people are rejecting the Bible.

But, that's not how it used to be. We need to stand up for what is right. We must speak for the Lord to set things right.